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844 woman's attendant is preferably her mother, but here too expediency will dictate the choice of midwife. Actual birth occurs in the privy-corridor just off the living room, where a group of interested kin, both male and female, may have gathered to chat while awaiting the birth. Children too form part of this group.

Meanwhile the mother sits with her legs spread and tugs at the rafters overhead to help her in her labor. The midwife sits directly opposite with her legs outside of, and parallel to, those of the mother. Between them lies a piece of pandanus mat on which the child is placed as soon as it is born. The midwife cleans the child with the thick juice squeezed beforehand from banana bark. When the afterbirth is ejected, the midwife measures a length of the umbilical cord reaching to the child's knees and severs it with a sharp sliver of bamboo. The end of the cord still attached to the child's body is coiled up on its abdomen. The birth fluids have meanwhile drained through the floor boards to the pigpen below. The afterbirth is placed in an old areca basket and is left to disintegrate in the bamboo thicket on the village boundary. A stillborn child is treated like the placenta. It is interesting that this type of disposal parallels that for human heads and spirit-bird bundles when their ceremonial treatment has been completed.*

553 [846] After completing birth the mother picks up the child, wraps it in the softest piece of woven or bark cloth available, and joins the group of friends and visitors in the living room. People present suggest various names; those of maternal and paternal grandparents are preferred. If a child begins to urinate or to nurse after a name is suggested, that is [551] the one adopted. Given names are feminine or masculine. For further identification both men and women carry their father's given name as surname. They never take the stepfather's name.

844 One gathers the impression that birth is considered an easy and casual procedure and that problems in beginning nursing are not a matter of formal concern. This does not mean that difficulties never occur, but it does indicate that the society has not emphasized such difficulties. There is also no emphasis on modesty in connection with birth, although on other occasions there are strong feelings about exposing the genitals. Birth is definitely women's business, but men are not completely excluded.

In this connection, and despite my emphasis on the casualness of the procedure, it is an interesting contradiction that many men feel a certain disgust if they are offered food prepared by a woman who has served recently as a midwife. When I discussed this matter one day

* See pages 130–31 and 160–61 for descriptions of these ceremonies.

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Part 3 AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Procedure and Presentation

THIS part consists of eight autobiographies, each of which is followed by Dr. Kardiner's analysis of it. The chart on the next page gives in condensed form certain information about the subjects. Preceding each autobiography is a genealogy. These lists do not pretend to be complete, but they do include the names of the kinsmen most frequently mentioned. They serve to give some idea of the size and nature of the kin group in which each subject grew up. A glance will reveal the difference between Fantan and Tilapada in wealth of close relatives. This is important among a people theoretically so dependent on kin loyalties for support and status. Duplications and variations in personal names may confuse the reader as much as they do the Alorese, but I have tried to overcome this obstacle as far as possible.* 128

The persons from whom autobiographies were secured do not represent the ideal or "type" person of Atimelang. The most successful men said they were too busy with their financial and ceremonial affairs to spend the time required for telling a life history. Actually they probably did not need either the fee or the prestige that working with me involved. The "ideal" women of Atimelang, of whom there were a few, were either too unassertive or too engrossed in work to come daily to my house. I am under the impression that inability to secure autobiographical material from the successful type individuals of a culture is an experience many ethnographers have had in functioning societies. However, the autobiographies given here do represent, on the whole, average Atimelang adults. Of the eight, Fantan, Malelaka, and Lomani are farthest from the norm. 115 124

No attempt was made to secure this material until I had been almost a year in the community and was able, therefore, to estimate the status of the informant in his own social milieu. I then selected people who were representative, articulate, and had good rapport with both the interpreter and myself. Autobiographical interviews were limited to one hour each morning before the informant began his day's work. It was understood that each session would begin with dreams of the preceding 124

* In the case of an older person the term of respect for age, i.e., *kalieta*, was suffixed to the first syllables of the given name. For example, Padafani as an older man might be known as Padakalieta. In addition, the given name might be contracted with the first syllables of the father's name. For example, Padafani whose father is called Manimai might also be referred to as Padamani. 153

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were feeding the souls, my familiar spirit Lomani came. The dead people sent two tiny spiders, which hung down in front of me, and my familiar spirit saw them. I caught them and placed one on the hollow of my throat and one on the hollow of Lonmobi's throat. They were the souls of unborn children, and they entered our bodies. Then my familiar spirit said to Lonmobi, "You will be pregnant first, and then my mother [the informant] will be pregnant." We went to a spring and dammed up a place to make a small pool. We pounded the necessary leaves and tied them on our abdomens with vines. Then we cut the vines and let them fall into the pool. Shortly after that we were both pregnant. Lonmobi's child died. That was the time I bore Maieta [her son, now about fourteen].

April 26, 1939

Last night I dreamed that Maitama and Kolmai [his wife] went to Fungwati. As they came back over Manikameng [a ridge above the village], I saw them carrying a branch of a tree, holding it up in their hands. I asked them, "If that is areca, can we chew it?" They said, "Oh, if we hold this in our hands, our necks will get long. When we peel it, it is slippery." [The informant did not know what this meant.] When we approached their house, we saw that many people were gathered there. We looked back toward Manikameng and it was just hanging in air. [Stop.] I looked behind us and saw there were many albino rats with nice patterns in their fur. Some had no fur on their heads, so that you could see the bare skin. I said, "Those are evil rats; evil spirits are in them. Formerly we were afraid, but now the nonya is here and we are not afraid any more. We shall go tell her to bring her gun, and we shall shoot them." Then I woke up.

What shall I talk about? [I answered that she should talk of whatever entered her mind.]

I gave birth to Kolaka [her daughter, about three years old]. While she was still small, she cried all night long and would not stop. Then Lopada said, "If your child cries all the time, give her the name Kolaka and she will stop." [Stop.] I said to people, "Tell me what kind of a person my mother was. Was she light or dark? [Kolaka had very light skin.] I was still small when she died, and I did not see her." People said she had scabies. That night I dreamed that my mother sat near my feet and that she did indeed have scabies. My mother was tickling my child because she was not named after her. This was why the child cried constantly. I went to Lopada with a chicken, and she said to change the

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159 name from Fuifani to Kolaka. [That is, the child was renamed after her dead grandmother so the ghost would stop teasing her. Stop.] Then Mailang said, "The next time I feed my sacred hearth, you must come. Your mother had no other male kin, only me. I am the only one." After we had changed the child's name, she didn't cry any more. [Stop.]

At the Yetok feast Mailang does not take part. He waits for the Ading feast. Then we, his female kin, all go there and gather about him. [Stop.] He calls his female kin when he feeds his sacred hearth, and we all go. [Stop.] If we don't go, the sacred hearth makes my children sick. Then they must take a chicken to sacrifice to the hearth before they recover. [Stop.] After we feed the sacred hearth, all the women go home and the men beat gongs and throw fire into the tree. [Stop.] Then Mailang said to us, "Female kin, listen to my voice. When I use a low deep voice as I throw the fire, a large rain will come; but if you hear that my voice is high and shrill, you will have good crops, and you must plant many fields of sun corn so that you will get much food." [Stop.] When he feeds his hearth and does not scorch the rice he cooks for it, he says, "Female children, cut many fields of sun corn; you will get good crops."

[I tried to divert her from these ethnographic details by asking why she named her child, as she did, after a familiar spirit.] Endirini helped me at childbirth, because we were both seers. At that time we did not pay her familiar spirit, and it was angry. It caused the navel to bleed and bleed. Endirini said we had better name the child after her familiar spirit, Fuifani. When we did this, the child's navel stopped bleeding. [Stop.] When I gave birth, my husband was not there. I took the child in my arms, and the child began to bleed. Also, my side hurt me badly, so I cried. I told Likma to give the dead spirits some raw rice. Langmai was thinking of buying a sheep [for a death feast]. He hadn't paid for it, so the owners took it back. I was sick because of these dead people for whom the feast was intended. Endirini gave the child the name of her familiar spirit, and we fed the dead. For this reason both the child and I recovered. [Stop.]

At that time Langmai was doing trail work. The chief of Atimelang said, "Your wife is giving birth, so stay away from her." [Stop. Why?] Because the soul of the child follows the father and leaves when the father does. That is why people who sit with the mother at this time say, "Oh, a pig has bitten your father." Then the child's soul is afraid to follow its father. [Stop.] When I came out of the house, Langmai